

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 1-4 without prejudice.

Please add claims 5-14 reading as follows:

--5. A method for the manufacture of a copper microalloy comprising

(a) mixing a copper alloy containing S, Se, As, Sb, Bi, Sn, Zn, Ni, Fe, Ag

or Te impurities in amounts of the order of tens of weight ppm, with lead to yield a microalloy having a final concentration of at least 200 weight ppm of lead; and

(b) casting the microalloy.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the microalloy is cast by batch casting, semi-continuous casting or continuous casting.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein the microalloy has a lead content of more than 300 weight ppm.

8. The method of claim 5, wherein the microalloy has a lead content of more than 350 weight ppm.

9. A method for the manufacture of a copper microalloy containing lead, comprising:

(a) preheating a copper alloy containing (1) S, Se, As, Sb, Bi, Sn, Zn, Ni, Fe, Ag, or Te impurities in amounts of the order of tens of weight ppm and (2) less than 80 weight ppm of the impurities Zn, Ag, Cd, Sb, Ni, Fe, Bi, Sn and S, at 550-650° C for 5-600 seconds;

(b) mixing the copper alloy with lead to yield a microalloy having at least 200 weight ppm of lead; and

(c) casting the microalloy, to decrease the softening temperature, the annealing temperature and the recrystallization temperature of the microalloy to values lower than 200°C.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the microalloy has a lead content of more than 300 weight ppm.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the microalloy has a lead content of more than 350 weight ppm.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein the hydrogen content of the microalloy is 0.5-0.7 weight ppm after casting.

13. The method of claim 9, wherein the microalloy is cast by batch casting, semi-continuous casting or continuous casting.